

Presentation of the *Dossier*

The journal *Caminhando*, presents in this issue 23, number 1, a very important contribution to the study of artifactual sources and monumental inscriptions. This is the *Dossier* **The El-Amarna Correspondence**, composed of a set of so-called *Letters from the site of Tell el-Amarna*, a precious library of diplomatic correspondence from the ancient Near East, exchanged between the Pharaohs Amenhotep III (1390–1352) and Amenhotep IV, Akenaton (1352–1336), and the great kingdoms of the time, such as Babylon, Assyria and Mitanni, as well as between these pharaohs and the rulers of city-state of the Levant in the XIV century before our Age. In the **collection** are the researches produced and presented in the Postgraduate Program in Religion Sciences of the Methodist University of São Paulo (Umesp), they are part of the 2017 project of the Research Group “Archeology of the Ancient Near East”, registered in the CNPq under No. 4338921870858325 and coordinated by Prof. Dr. José Ademar Kaefer. The *Dossier* with the result of these researches was organized by professors João Batista Ribeiro Santos and José Ademar Kaefer.

There is a librarian division that distinguishes the sources between letters from the “little kings” and letters from the “great kings”, considering the material testimonies of the contacts of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV with great kings of the ancient Near East out of the 382 ceramic tablets that make up the collection of the library. Correspondences were found in subsequent archaeological expeditions: expeditions in 1890–1891, coordinated by Flinders Petrie; expeditions in 1901–1907; expeditions systematically between 1911–1914; and conclusive researches between 1921–1936. The archaeological searches on the site were resumed in 1977 under the direction of the Egypt Exploration Society and coordinated by Barry Kemp (Cambridge University, UK).

The interest of historical research and biblical interpretation by these sources gains in importance insofar as it presents regional mapography, revealing the structures and forms of society, the ethnic formation of social values, political dealings and symbolic uses, as well as the intense conflicts in the various central and border areas to the city-states under the Egyptian

protectorate. Otherwise, cities important for the contexts covered in biblical studies are present, is the case of Jerusalem (*Ú-ru-sa-lim*) and autochthonous groups with some association through semantics and the way of being, such as social marginals *ḥābiru* (*pr*, *‘abiru*) and populations that can be identified ethnically from the Iron Age I in the south of Levant.

It is perhaps the first documentary *corpus*, and this aspect could be the only one addressed in this *Dossier*, but the wealth of artifactual sources would be contemplated in a small measure, so the translations presented here serve as images of various interpretations and discoveries.

The sequence of the research followed the bibliographic catalog of the sources, EA = El-Amarna (*Letters of Tell el-Amarna*, in the numbering adopted by the researchers J.A. Knudtzon, A.F. Rainey and W.L. Moran).

Jovanir Lage, with **The hereditary state of Amurru: conspiracy, conflicts and betrayal in the political changes of the Egyptian domain in the XIVth c. AEC. (EA 156-171)**, proposes a study that aims to address letters EA 156-171 from the collection of cuneiform documents, discovered in Tell el-Amarna. For the author, “the exchange of correspondences between the Great King Amenhotep IV and his ruler ‘Aziru reveal the troubled relations between the Empire and the states under its rule, in the face of the dispute for power in the face of territorial expansion. In the establishment of the State of Amurru, ‘Aziru tries to maintain the appearances of fidelity to the King, even accused of conspiracy and desertion next to the Hittite Kingdom”.

Fabiola Weber e João Batista Ribeiro Santos, with search **In the periphery of empires: contextual historiography of the letters of the ruler Bir-ia-wa-za from Di-maš-qa to the great king Amenhotep IV of Mi-iš-ri**, in which they carry out a historiography of letters EA 194-197, “aims to present the contexts in which Di-maš-qa emerges as a city-State and, in a geographical perspective, the policies practiced in the ancient Near East in which we situate the so-called ‘Era of ‘Amarna’. The historical bases are the support for the presentation of the letters of Bir-ia-wa-za, of Di-maš-qa, as well as the conflicts representative of the region at that time”.

Tiago Abdalla, with **Reyes cananeos expresan lealtad a su señor egipcio: um estudo critico-literario e histórico-social de las Cartas de Armarna 221-222 & 227-228**, “seeks to present a critical analysis of four letters from Tel-Amarna sent by Canaanite rulers to their suzerain, the Egyptian pharaoh (EA 221-222 and 227-228). These letters originate from two different regions, Tel Yokneam and Hazor, and were possibly written by three distinct vassal-kings”.

Élcio Valmiro Sales de Mendonça, writes **The resistance of Biridiya from Megiddo against the attacks of Labayu from Shechem (EA 242-249, 365)**, with which it “aims to analyze the letters of El-Amarna concerning Biridiya of Megiddo and his conflict with Labayu of Shechem. The contents of such letters provide important material for the knowledge of the political environment and the instability of the final period of the Egyptian rule over the city-states of Canaan”.

Agustinus Syukur e José Ademar Kaefer researched **The Amarna letters 249-250 and the conflict between city-states in Canaan** to elucidate “the conflict between the Canaan city-states during the reigns of the Egyptian kings Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akenaton). Because of internal crisis, Egypt lost the control over its vassals in Canaan, which made possible a revolt in this region, initially led by Lab’ayu, ruler of Shechem, and then by Mut-Ba’lu, one of the sons of Lab’ayu and ruler of Pella”.

Silas Klein, with **The revolt of the ants: the insurrection of Labayu and his sons in EA 252-256**, “offers an historical-literary analysis of the letters EA 252-256. From the translation, analysis of rhetorical structure and exploration of the provenience studies of the tables, we offer a commentary to the documents, elucidating the content and its historical consequences. In the end, we present a proposal of historical reconstruction of the Labayu Revolt”.

Carlos Mario Vásquez, presents an inquiry and the result of research on **A ruling dynasty in Gezer? A reading based on Amarna Tablets**, where he addresses “as cartas de Amarna 267-272, 293, 298-300, 369 e 378, que tratam das correspondências dos governantes da Cidade-Estado de Gezer para o rei do Egito”.

Leide Jane Soares dos Santos brings us **Belit-Nesheti, Letters of the Lady of the Lions to the King of Egypt: EA 273 and EA 274**, with which he performs “a critical analysis of the letters of the Lady of the Lions, comparing them with the plates of female deities found in BetSemes, besides some studies on the structures of the cities of the Sefelá in the period of Amarna. From this research it is possible to raise questions about the location of these cities and the conflicts existing in the Sefelá, the commercial importance of this territory, the style of correspondence of the vassal kings with Egypt, the region of Gezer in which letters 273-274 were written which help to understand her dominion over neighboring cities, theories about the location of the Lions’ kingdom between Bet-Semes or Sapuma, and the cult of the lion figure as a representation of authority, royalty, or divinity of the Canaanites worshiped at the time”.

Omar João da Silva closes the *Dossier* with his research **Abdi-Heba, a vassal ruler in distress or a daring strategist?**, “proposes an analytical study critical-literary and historical-social of the letters of El-Amarna, with emphasis on the collection of correspondences of the vassal king of Jerusalem, Abdi-Heba addressed to the Egyptian king in the 14th century B.C.E. However, our object of the study and analysis is the collection of letters EA 285 to 291”.

José Ademar Kaefer concludes the dossier, with the article **The Tell el-Amarna letters: classification**, in a panoramic perspective on the documents and the site.

In addition, we want to highlight in the **collection** the historiographic research elaborated by Fabíola Weber and João Batista Ribeiro Santos and the approach of the rhetorical aspect, elaborated by Silas Klein, as reading exercises by methodological processes little developed in editions of transcriptions of the correspondences.

Two searches in the “Articles”: **In the beginning was suffering: the temple ghost**, of *Rafael de Castro Lins*; **The theology of Jürgen Moltmann and the psychoanalysis of Freud**, of *Fernando Cardoso Bertoldo*.

This number also gives us with the “Translation” section, we are invited and invited to enjoy the valuable translation of the **Precepts of Clement**, of *Cesar Motta Rios*.

In the “Analysis of Research Results” section, **Short presentation and description of the Antigo Testamento Interlinear Hebraico-Português, vol. 3: Profetas Posteriores**, result of research by Edson de Faria Francisco.

Finally, and equally important, two reviews: one written by *Helmut Renders*, on **The death of Jesus and our life: the significance of the cross**, Walter Klaiber’s Book; and another written by *Graham McGeoch* on the book **From Achimota to Arusha: an ecumenical journey of Mission in Africa**, of Lesmore Gibson Ezekiel and Jooseop Keum.

We renew the great pleasure of presenting the journal *Caminhando*, in a new edition, keeping the same pretensions: to say the not yet said, that is relevant in favor of life, not only academic, but that colloquial sapience too. Therefore, we invite you to productive leisure and reading pleasure!

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Organizers of the Dossier